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### A Triangular Contest of Power on the Tea-Horse Road

Lejiu Sun

Wake Forest University, [baciocco@upenn.edu](mailto:baciocco@upenn.edu)

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A TRIANGULAR CONTEST OF POWER ON THE  
TEA-HORSE ROAD:  
THE TANG DYNASTY, TIBETAN EMPIRE, AND  
THE NANZHAO KINGDOM  
*Lejiu Sun (Wake Forest University)*

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Introduction

The Tea-Horse Road hardly makes it into the maps of the Silk Road. When it does, it is often shown as a road connecting the Indian Ocean with the Chinese empire. This paper seeks to contribute to the current scholarly conversation by examining how this road functioned as a regional network. Focusing on the period from the seventh to the ninth centuries, the paper explores how the Tea-Horse Trade shaped and was shaped by the relationships among the Tang dynasty, Nanzhao kingdom, and the Tibetan Empire which governed the regions of modern-day Yunnan, Sichuan, and Tibet. These states formed a triangular relationship of contest and confrontation, each hatching strategies to capitalize on the trade along the Tea-Horse Road and to strengthen their standing in comparison to the other two competitors.

Before 755

Before 755, an unbalanced triangular contest of power appeared on the Tea-Horse Road. The Tang (618-907), founded by Li Yuan (the Emperor Gaozu), and the Tibetan Empire (634-842), founded by King Songtsen Gampo, had matching military strengths and flourished and declined roughly at the same pace. Nanzhao, however, was a newcomer to the competition, emerging as an independent state only in 738. During

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the first century and a half of their existence, the Tang dynasty and the Tibetan Empire formed an alliance through the marriages of two Tang princesses to Tibetan Kings. This was a diplomatic strategy known as *Heqin* (和亲), which had been practiced by Chinese courts since the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE). Both powers were leading players on the Tea-Horse Road. The first *Heqin* marriage happened in 641, when Princess Wencheng of Tang married King Songtsen Gampo of the Tibetan Empire. This marriage ushered in an era of free trade between the two states by allowing Tibetan merchants to sell their herds and handcrafts in exchange for Chinese silk, ironware, and especially, tea. The rise of tea drinking as a popular custom among Tibetan elite and Buddhist monks shortly after its introduction from Tang China was partially due to the belief that tea had the property to eliminate toxins in dairy and barley, the staple Tibetan diet. According to Chinese sources dated to the Ming period, the Tibetans admired tea, for tea was the only food that healed diseases and allergy caused by eating dairy products. Moreover, Tibetans, as most nomadic people, consumed a lot of cheese, and tea could balance the monotonous diet and prevent Tibetans from getting sick easily.<sup>1</sup> Considering both benefits, Tibetan doctors defined tea as medicine, and consequently, tea-drinking culture began to prevail among the Tibetan upper class and Buddhists.<sup>2</sup> Tea later became the top product traded on the Tea-Horse Road.

In 710, Princess Jincheng's marriage with King Me Agtsom elevated the relationship between the Tibetan Empire and Tang to an "Uncle-Nephew" level. According to the Tibetan classic *A Scholar's Feast*, Tibetan King Trisong Detsen claimed himself to be the son of prince Jincheng and called Han Chinese male adults "uncles" when he was one year old.<sup>3</sup> This story, despite its great exaggeration of King Trisong Detsen's intelligence, hinted that after the *Heqin* of Prince Jincheng, the Tibetan Empire respected the Tang as a nephew would to an

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uncle.

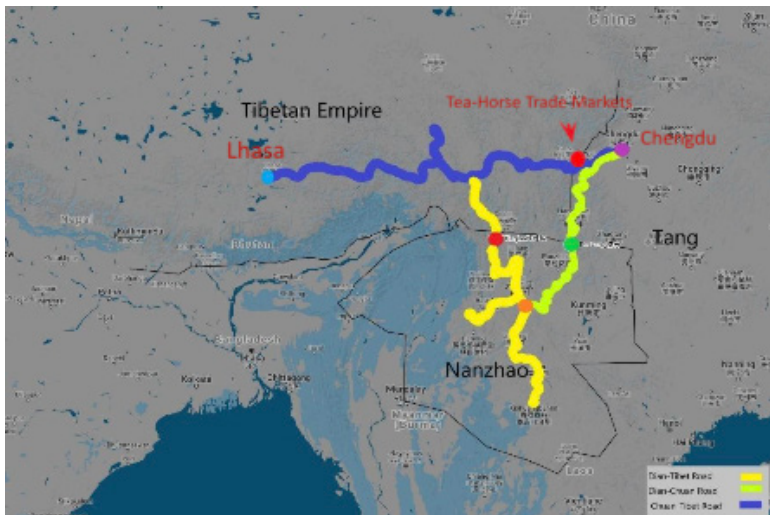
This close relationship culminated in a government-controlled horse and tea exchange. In 729, at the request of the Tibetan Empire, the two states began a routinized government-led horse and tea exchange through a mechanism known as the “tea-horse trade market” (茶马互市 *Cha ma hu shi*). Through this exchange, the volume of trade was negotiated and confirmed equally by both Tang and Tibetan governments. According to *The New Book of Tang* (dating to the 11th century), the Tibetan Empire requested that they be permitted to present horses as tributes to the Tang at Mount Chilin in present day Riyue Lake, Qinghai, and also requested to open markets for trade at Mount Gansong, in present day Songpan, Sichuan. As their messages reached the Tang court, the Tang prime minister Pei Guangting (裴光庭) weighed in on the proposals. Because Mount Gansong was near the Chinese central plains, having Tibetans stationed there for trade would pose a potential security threat; Pei suggested setting the exchange at Chilin, which was approved by Emperor Xuanzong. The emperor then commanded Li Quan -- the General of Imperial Insignia (金吾将军李倕) -- to supervise the erection of a stone stele at Chilin to mark the border between the two empires. The emperor further summoned Zhang Shougui (张守珪), General Li Xiaoyi (李孝逸), and the Tibetan envoy Khu Mangpoje (莽布支) to carry his edict to Jiannan and Hexi Circuits that governed the Tang domains bordering with Tibet, which says: “Henceforth our two countries shall remain in harmony and peace. There should be no aggression and violence towards each other.”<sup>4</sup>

In response to this agreement, both states established institutions which actively prepared for the tea-horse exchange. The Tibetan Empire recruited a group of five Han merchants — the *Han di wu cha shang* (汉地五茶商 “Five Chinese Tea Traders”) who specialized in conducting the tea-horse trade.<sup>5</sup> The “Five Chinese Tea Traders” conducted state-oriented trade to

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make sure the revenue from tea-horse exchanges was funneled back to the Tibetan government and facilitated the cultural exchange between the Tibetan Empire and Tang.

The Tang also established the Institute for Tea-Horse Exchange (茶马交换所 *Cha ma jiao huan suo*) in Anduo (安多) as an official market. A government-led trading system on the Sichuan-Tibet road emerged, and the tea-horse trade that passed through it seemed unstoppable. Since 731, each time the border markets were opened, both the Tang and Tibetan Empire would send a governor to take charge of the shipment of their goods to the designated market. The goods were restricted to just tea and horses. Such a win-win exchange took place no less than 191 times in 116 years (from 731 to 846). During this time Tang sent its officers to Tibet 66 times, while Tibet sent its ambassadors to the Tang 125 times. By 731, the Tibetan government had imported so much tea through the Tea-Horse Exchange Markets that tea became affordable for the common Tibetans. From then on it gradually became an indispensable part of the Tibetan diet (see Map 1 below).<sup>6</sup>



## A Triangular Contest of Power on the Tea-Horse Road



Map One: the Chuan (Sichuan)-Tibet Road

The eruption of tensions towards the mid-eighth century between Tang and the Tibetan empire interfered with their trade, and the nascent Nanzhao Kingdom was drawn into the conflict, resulting in the formation of an unbalanced triangular power relation in the region. In 737, a war broke out between Tang and the Tibetan empire. While Tang was still able to import horses from its stud-farms in Longyou, the Tibetan empire needed to find another tea-producing country to substitute for Tang.<sup>7</sup>

In 750, Nanzhao, formerly known as Mengsheman (蒙舍蛮), a loose cluster of tribes that collectively sent tribute to the Tang court, was unified by King Piluoge (阁罗凤) in 649. No longer willing to suffer the brutal governance by Zhang Qiantuo (张虔陀), the Tang prefecture in Yunnan rebelled. King Geluofeng, who led this rebellion, killed Zhang Qiantuo.<sup>8</sup> When the Tang general Xian Yuzhongtong (鲜于仲通) led an attack on Nanzhao, Nanzhao turned to ally with the Tibetan Empire.<sup>9</sup> Nanzhao was a traditional tea-producing country, where tea bushes were found throughout the mountains within the limits of Yinsheng city (银生城). The locals did not develop an industry of growing and preparing tea for remote markets, but harvested it for their own consumption. They brewed and drank the tea with Sichuan pepper, ginger, and cinnamon.<sup>10</sup> Noticing this potential tea-provider, the Tibetan Empire generously sent 600,000 soldiers to assist Nanzhao, won the battle against the Tang, and granted Nanzhao the title “brother-like state,” the name “Eastern Emperor” and a golden seal to the King of Nanzhao.<sup>11</sup>

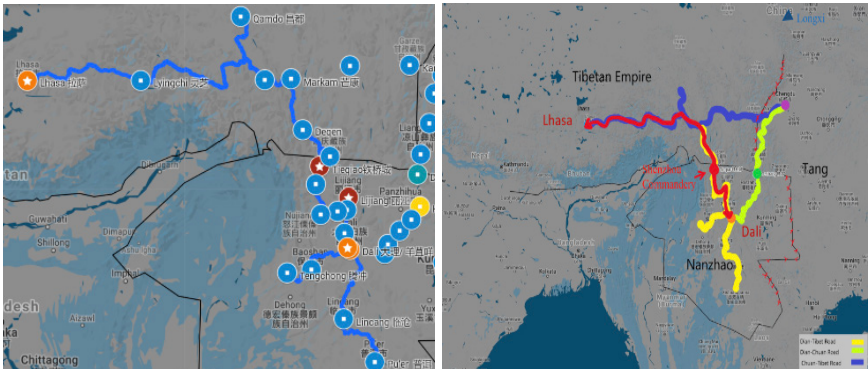
In order to import tea from Nanzhao, the Tibetan empire

opened the trade route from Dali in Nanzhao to Lhasa in Tibet. The Tibetan empire also established the Shenzhou Commandery (Iron Bridge Commandery) at the border to take control of the tea export in Nanzhao. The Shenzhou Iron Bridge was located at present day Ta Cheng, which had previously been a military station between the Tibetan Empire and Nanzhao. In 703, the Tibetan king built the Shenzhou Iron Bridge across the Jinsha River (金沙江, the river on the border between Nanzhao and the Tibetan Empire). After Nanzhao betrayed Tang, the Tibetan Empire left its troops in the city of Ta Cheng. As the war ended, two cities named as the Eastern and Western Iron Bridge Cities (铁桥城 the city of iron bridge) developed around this bridge, and these two cities functioned as the trading ports between Nanzhao and the Tibetan Empire. Noticing this economic benefit, the Tibetan Empire dispatched troops and officers to establish the Shenzhou Commandery in the Western Iron Bridge City.<sup>12</sup> As a frontier juncture, the Shenzhou Commandery held the barracks of Tibetan troops who carried on the mission of protecting the Shenzhou Iron Bridge, monitoring Tang and Nanzhao, and representing the alliance between the Tibetan Empire and Nanzhao. As a governmental institution, the Shenzhou Commandery served as the gate on the Dian (modern day Yunnan)-Tibet Road to collect heavy taxes from traders, maintain the safety of international mercantile activities, and control exportation and importation of tea in Nanzhao. The Shenzhou Commandery symbolized the Tibetan Empire's authoritarian control over the Dian-Tibet trade route. Not capable of standing up to its neighbor, Nanzhao was taken advantage of economically by the Tibetan Empire.

However, even without the ability to control the trading center in the Iron Bridge Cities, Nanzhao still benefited from this Tibet-led trading system. With the help of the Tibetan government, the Dian-Tibet trade route was systemized with its center in the Iron Bridge cities. On this Dian-Chuan road,

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it was still Han Chinese merchants who transported tea, the main goods, mostly from Yunnan, but sometimes from Sichuan, to Tibetan towns and cities, sold them to Tibetan merchants. Reciprocally, merchants returned with horses, herbs and other agricultural products from Tibet for resale in major trading cities in Nanzhao, such as Lijiang, Dali and Kunming.<sup>13</sup> According to *Manshu*, Tibetan merchants also frequently visited these cities to trade.<sup>14</sup> Scattered trading cities like Dali, Lijiang, Zhongdian, Deqin and Kunming were connected by these traveling merchants. The sophisticated trading network economically unified the Nanzhao Kingdom (See Map 2). Some of the trading cities accumulated wealth, which would support Nanzhao's development after 755.



Map Two: the Dian-Tibet Road

The period before 755, therefore, can be seen as the age of unbalanced triangular competition and confrontation on the Tea-Horse Road. The first century and half witnessed similar developments happening in both Tang and the Tibetan Empire. Nanzhao acted as a vassal state of either the Tang or Tibetan Empire, but also actively prepared for its own rise. None of the three states fully dominated the trade; all had their gains and losses. Government control, in the form of Tea-Horse Exchange policies or heavy taxation, already appeared on the Tea-Horse Road, but this seems to have primarily been driven by political reasons.



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### After 755

From 755 to 866, the Tang and Tibetan Empires both declined due to internal and external threats. This opened up an opportunity for Nanzhao to grow. As state power became more equally distributed among the three partners, each state shifted their trading purpose from political game-play to economic recovery. In 755, the An Lushan Rebellion devastated Tang's military and economy. Seizing the opportunity, the Tibetan Empire, under the leadership of King Trisong Detsen, moved to control the Longyou horse ranches, forcing the Tang to import horses and borrow cavalry from its northern neighbor Uyghurs at higher prices.<sup>15</sup> Simultaneously, Nanzhao troops, under King Geluofeng (阁罗凤), conquered the Juan perfection (嵩州) of Tang in its northwest.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the Tang Court, desperately in need of money, had to use the Tea-Horse Road trade to enrich its treasury.

Starting in 782, Tang levied taxes on tea as well as on lacquer, wood and bamboo, something it had never done previously.<sup>17</sup> The tax was set at one tenth of the value of the goods.<sup>18</sup> The tea tax effectively provided the Tang government with a large financial fund, which could be deployed to strengthen Tang's national defense. The efficacy of this tax came from the massive tea-trade between the Tibetan Empire and the Tang government. Except for the years of wars between them, the two empires continued to carry on their trade. By the year 781 (under the rule of Trisong Detsen), Tang, with declining state power, valued the economic benefit from Tea-Horse Road trade more than its political value.

Later in 835, at the eve of another war between Tang and the Tibetan Empire, Tang rolled out the "Que cha" policy, which was first proposed by Wang Ya, who became the first Que Cha Shi (榷茶使 Superintendent of Tea Monopoly).<sup>19</sup> Tang's Que Cha policy included prohibiting all private tea trade and centralizing all processes of making tea - growing, picking, pan

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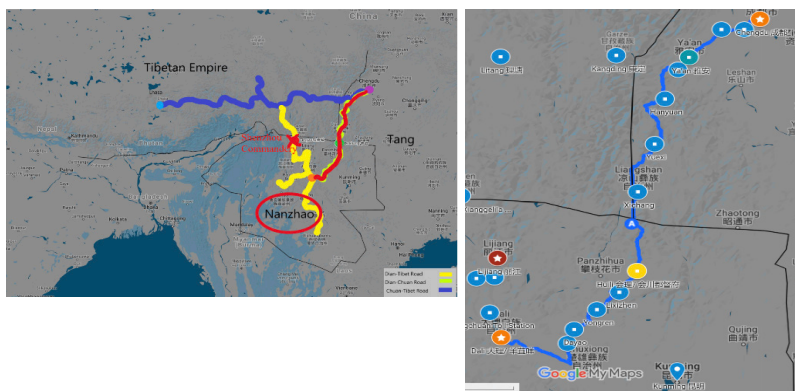
frying, sorting, packing and marketing - under state control. The local government established state-run tea plantations, abolished private-ownership of tea gardens, and enforced moving private tea trees to state-run tea plantations.<sup>20</sup> After 840, under the rule of Emperor Wu of Tang, officer Cui Gong revised the Que Cha policy by adding taxes on tea merchants passing through every prefecture. After that, tea smuggling gradually increased, forcing the Tang to update the Que cha policy by adding heavy penalties for tea smugglers. Private traders who have dealt more than 300 *jin* of tea for three times, or transported tea over long distances, would be sentenced to death.<sup>21</sup> This Que Cha policy brought the tea industry under state monopoly. This enabled the Tang court to collect all revenues from tea production, thereby supporting its treasury on a larger scale. Another example could hint at the magnitude of the profits reaped by the dynasty and the officials in charge of its implementation. Several years after Wang Ya became the Superintendent of Tea Monopoly, he was charged with bribery and corruption. Soldiers and mobs stormed his estate and found tens of thousands of treasures.<sup>22</sup>

From taxing this trade to monopolizing it, Tang devised increasingly aggressive strategies to profit from the lucrative Tea-Horse Road trade. To some degree, these policies sustained Tang's rule for decades, but, as do all expedient means, neither tax nor the Que Cha policy fully saved Tang from collapsing. They did, however, function as effective innovations that led to the systemization of the Tea-Horse Road.

To its southwest, after 44 years allying with the Tibetan empire, Nanzhao was powerful enough to break this relationship. In 794, Tang ambassador Wei Gao (韦皋), after trying in vain for five years to persuade Nanzhao to submit to the Tang, secretly paid a visit to Nanzhao. Wei Gao presented the letter from the Tang Emperor asking Yimouxun (异牟寻), the King of Nanzhao, to return the golden seal to the Tibetan Empire as a symbol of ending their alliance with Tibet.<sup>23</sup>

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Already harboring resentment against the Tibetan Empire, King Yimouxun allied with the Tang and promptly occupied sixteen major Tibetan cities.<sup>24</sup> Among them were the Iron Bridge Cities (铁桥城), where the Shenzhou Commandery was located. Finally, in 795, when Nanzhao garrisoned in the Youbaluo mountain in Xichuan (西川) and Tang stabilized its territory in Xizhou (西州), the Dian-Chuan Road was finally opened as the third official trade route in the Tea-Horse Road trade region, linking Tang's southwestern frontier region of Chuan in modern day Sichuan province with Nanzhao's major trading centers in Dian (namely the modern day Yunnan province).<sup>25</sup> See Map 3, The Dian-Chuan Tea-Horse Road, below. Occupying the Shenzhou Commandery, the previous trading center of the Tibetan Empire, Nanzhao controlled mercantile activities on the road between Yunnan and Tibet.



Map Three: the Dian-Chuan Road

Meanwhile, during the period from 794 to 886, Nanzhao maintained an overall peaceful relation with Tang, sending 46 missions in total to the Tang court via the Dian-Chuan Road for gift exchange. On one of these missions, King Yimouxun of Nanzhao sent 60 horses as well as 100 Tibetan war prisoners to the Tang court to strengthen the friendship. In other years the gifts were diverse, including people (mainly

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slaves, prisoners of war, and artists), animals (mostly horses), aromatics and herbs, ores, and other manufactures.<sup>26</sup> This relationship between Nanzhao and Tang was similar to the Tibet-Tang alliance in the early 7th century, in which both independent states peacefully exchanged their goods for political reasons. Nevertheless, neither Tang nor Nanzhao maintained gift-sending missions for economic purposes. For Nanzhao, the peaceful relationship with Tang facilitated its trade on the Dian-Chuan Road. For Tang, Nanzhao could check the expansion of the Tibetan Empire and thereout protect its commercial center in Sichuan.

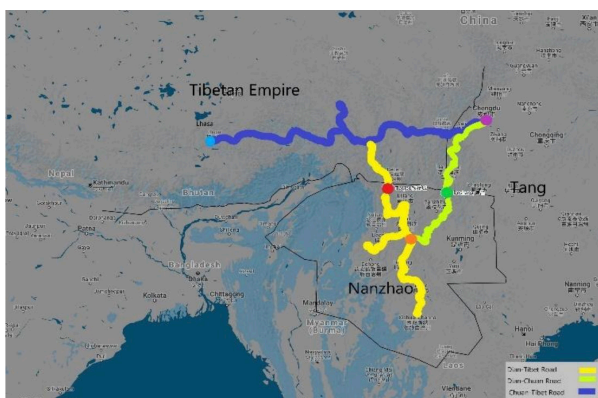
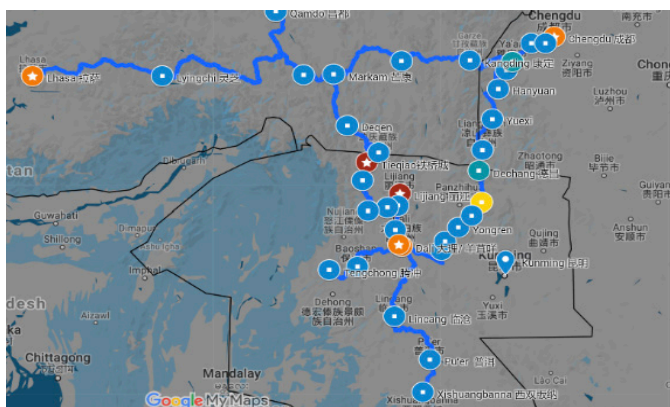
During this period, the Tang and Tibetan empires, suffering a decline in their respective powers, invented policies to maintain their political influences on the Tea-Horse Road. Some of these policies were proven effective and would be borrowed by their successors in later period. For example, the taxation on tea and the Que Cha policy invented by the Tang for solving its desperate dilemma were later borrowed by the Song (960-1279) for the same purpose when dealing with Nanzhao's successor state Dali over issues related to the horse-salt exchange between them. Nanzhao, the weakest state in the earlier period, had grown to be a major influence on the Tea-Horse Road. Each state engaged this trade in a manner calculated to reflect its self-understanding of its position in the triangular international relationships. Yet, all three states sought to gain economic benefit within this triangular contest and confrontation on the Tea-Horse Road for economic reasons, in contrast to the game-play before 755.

### Conclusion

From the 7th to the 9th centuries, the triangular contest among Tang, Nanzhao and the Tibetan empire gradually intensified as each state sought to capitalize on the Tea-Horse Road trade. Their main purpose of trade shifted from

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political domination to economic recovery. Their diplomatic relationships, either peaceful or hostile, were reflected on the Tea-Horse Road exchange among them in the form of trade policies, institutions, and shifting road networks (See Map 4).



Map Four: the Map of the Tea-Horse Road

The supply and demand relationship of tea and horse also resulted in betrayals, invasions and treaties that affected diplomacy. While concrete actions taken may have differed, each partner to this contest sought the same goal: to strengthen itself at the expense of its neighbors by shaping this trade in its

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favor.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> According to a passage in the *Yanchayi* (严茶议 Yan's Comments on tea) 茶之为物，西戎吐蕃古今皆仰之，以其腥内之物，非茶不消，青稞之热，非茶不解” cited from Wang Tingxiang 王廷相(Ming Dynasty) *Yan cha yi* (严茶议》 Yan's Comments on tea);According to a passage in the *Mingshi* (明史 History of the Ming Dynasty), “番人嗜乳酪，不得茶，则困以病。故唐、宋以来，行以茶易马法，用制羌、戎，而明制尤密。有官茶，有商茶，皆贮边易马。官茶间徵课钞，商茶输课略如盐制。” Cited from Chang Qu 张廷玉 (Ming dynasty), *History of Ming* (明史 志第五十六食货四) *History of Ming, shi huo zhi*, juan 4, accessed online on April 3, 2018 at <https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=270027&remap=gb#p43>.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Freeman and Selena Ahmed, *Tea Horse Road: China's Ancient Trade Road to Tibet*, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> See Bawo Zulachenwa 巴卧·祖拉陈哇 (author) and Huang Hao 黄颢 (trans.), “Xianze xiyuan zhaiyi (wu)” (“贤者喜宴》摘译(五) Translated Excerpts from A Scholar's Feast (5))” ( *Xizang minzu xueyuan xuebao* (西藏民族学院学报 Journal of Xizang Minzu University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), 1981, no. 04: p. 53-70 and 82.

<sup>4</sup> *Xin Tangshu* (新唐书 The New Book of Tang), compiled in 1044-1060 by Ouyang Xiu 欧阳修 and Song Qi 宋祁, juan p. 230.

[http://www.guoxue.com/shibu/24shi/newtangsu/xts\\_230.htm](http://www.guoxue.com/shibu/24shi/newtangsu/xts_230.htm).

<sup>5</sup> *Zangzu jianshi bianxiezu* (藏族简史编写组 Brief history of Tibetan writing group), “Zang Zu Jian Shi” (藏族简史 A Brief History of Tibet), *Xizang renming chubanshe* (西藏人民出版社 the Tibet's People's Publishing House), 1985, 83; Original text: “至赤松德赞时期，藏族即以马匹大量换取内地的茶叶，茶马贸易开始发展起来。吐蕃为了加强对茶叶贸易的管理，派专人负责经营汉藏茶叶贸易，称为“汉地五茶商” cite from Pawo Tsuglag Threngwa (1504-1566) 《智者喜筵》 A Scholar's Feast, *pin* p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Peng, Yujuan 彭玉娟, ... Qiu, Jian 邱健, and Cang, Bang 昌邦, “Chama gudao ji qi dui cha wnehua chuanbo de jiaohu yingxiang tanxi” (茶马古道及其对茶文化传播的交互影响探析 the Ancient Tea-Horse Road Development and Its Reciprocal effect on the Tea Culture Communication). *Guangxi Minzu daxue xuebao* 广西民族大学学报 (哲学社会科学版) Journal of Guangxi University For Nationalities), no. 05(2016):p. 35.

<sup>7</sup> Longyou is located northwest of Chang 'an, in today's Shaanxi and

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Gansu; Denis Twitchett, ed., *Cambridge History of China, Vol. 3, Sui and T'ang China, 589-906*, Part 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 569.

<sup>8</sup> The Yunnan prefecture of Tang was located in the present-day Yunnan province of China, which includes Nanzhao during Zhang Qiantuo's period.

<sup>9</sup> Fang, Tie 方铁. "Nanzhao, tubo yu tangchao sanzhe jian de guanxi" (南诏、吐蕃与唐朝三者间的关系 The relationship between nanzhao, tubo and tandynasty). *Zhongguo zangxue* (中国藏学 China Tibetology) 63, no.3 (2003): p. 44.

<sup>10</sup> *Manshu* (蛮书 Book of Southern Barbarians, 868-873), by Fan Chuo, juan 7, photo-reproduced edition in *Jingyin wenyuange siku quanshu* (景印文淵閣四庫全書 Complete Collection of the Four Treasures), vo. 464 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1983-1986), p. 25.

<sup>11</sup> Hans Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade in the Chinese World, 589-1276* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2005), p. 260.

<sup>12</sup> Feng, Zhi 冯智. "Tubo nanzhao shenzhou tieqia" (吐蕃南诏神州铁桥 The Tibetan Empire, Nanzhao and the Shenzhou Iron Bridge). *Xizang yanjiu* (西藏研究 Tibetan Studies), no. 02 (1992), [http://www.tibet.cn/cn/cloud/xszqkk/xzyj/1992/2/201710/t20171025\\_4604319.html](http://www.tibet.cn/cn/cloud/xszqkk/xzyj/1992/2/201710/t20171025_4604319.html).

<sup>13</sup> Gu, Zhongyuan 谷中原 and Lu, Hui 鲁惠. "Xinan Diqu Chama Gudao Lunlu" (西南地区茶马古道论略, Discussion on Tea-horse Ancient Road in Southwest China) *Chaye Tongxun* (茶叶通讯 Tea Communication), no. 02 (2007), <http://kns.cnki.net/kns/ViewPage/viewsave.aspx>.

<sup>14</sup> *Manshu*, juan 2, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Denis Twitchett, ed., "*Cambridge History of China*," p. 569.

<sup>16</sup> Fang, Tie 方铁. "Nanzhao, tubo yu tangchao sanzhe jian de guanxi," p. 44.

<sup>17</sup> Kuang, Lasheng 况腊生, Qianxi songdai chama maoyi zhidu (浅析宋代茶马贸易制度 A brief analysis of tea and horse trade system in Song dynasty), *Lanzhou Xuekan* (兰州学刊 Lanzhou Academic Journal) 176, no. 05 (2008): p. 147.

<sup>18</sup> See *Jiu tangshu* (舊唐書 Old Book of Tang), compiled by Liu Xu 劉昫 (888-947), juan 12, digitized edition, accessed online on April 2, 2019, at <https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=925753&remap=gb>.

<sup>19</sup> See *Jiu tangshu*, juan 169, accessed online on April 2, 2019, at <https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=925753&remap=gb>.

<sup>20</sup> Zhang, Yongguo 张永国. "Chama gudao yu chama maoyi de lishi yu jiazhi" (茶马古道与茶马贸易的历史与价值 The history and value of the Tea-Horse Road and Tea-Horse Trade). *Xizang daxue xuebao* (西藏大学学报(汉文版



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Journal of Tibetan University) 21, no.2 (2006), p. 34-40; Sun Hongsheng 孙洪生, “Tangdai quecha shulun” (唐代榷茶述论 On the Que Cha Policy in the Tang Dynasty), *Nongye kaogu* (农业考古 Agricultural Archeology), no. 4 (1997): p. 314.

<sup>21</sup> 1 *jin* in the Tang equals to about 680 grams today; See *Xin tangshu* (新唐書 New Book of Tang), compiled by Ouyang Xiu 欧阳修 (1007–1072) and Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061), juan 54, digitized edition, accessed online on April 5, 2019, at <https://zh.wikisource.org/zh-hans/%E6%96%B0%E5%94%90%E6%9B%B8/%E5%8D%B7054>

<sup>22</sup> See *Jiu tangshu*, juan p. 169.

<sup>23</sup> Hu, Yantao 胡岩涛, “Tangchao, tubo, nanzhao xinan zhanshi yu changan zhanlue fangyu” (唐朝、吐蕃、南 西南战事与长安战略防御——以代宗、德宗朝为中心 Tang Dynasty, Tubo, Nanzhao Southwest War and Chang’an Strategic Defense). *Xizang Mingzu Daxue Xuebao* (西藏民族大学学报(哲学社会科学版) Journal of Xizang Minzu University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)) 39, no. 02 (March 2018): p. 34.

<sup>24</sup> Fang, Tie 方铁, “Nanzhao, tubo yu tangchao sanzhe jian de guanxi,” p. 46.

<sup>25</sup> Hu, Yantao 胡岩涛, “Tangchao, tubo, nanzhao xinan zhanshi yu changan zhanlue fangyu,” p. 36.

<sup>26</sup> Bielenstein, *Diplomacy and Trade in the Chinese World*, p. 273.